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ABSTRACT

Whole language has the potential to boost literacy in Third World countries like Nigeria, where the language curriculum has not been given the political and economic support it deserves. The economic depression in the Third World may not allow for a robust development of whole language. One effect of the decay of education in the Third World is the resurgence of illiteracy in all levels of the school system. A recent empirical study shows that a whole language approach to the teaching of reading comprehension facilitates literacy learning and teaching more than the "classical" method which currently informs the teaching of reading in most Third World Anglophone states. Some problems in the adoption of whole language in Nigeria are the paralysis in the growth and development of indigenous literature; the unavailability of books from overseas; and the lack of political and economic will to support whole language. The Ile-Ife branch of Teachers Applying Whole Language has embarked on a number of activities to acquaint literacy teachers with whole language. The Department of Teacher Education, University of Ibadan, has developed a Curriculum Recycling Theory which strives to transfer into school the zest and dynamism for learning that many Nigerian students demonstrate at home. The habits and attitudes of Third World learners, parents, and administrators need to be studied in order to understand why they do what they do. There is also a need to contextualize and domesticate whole language in Third World countries. (Contains 32 references.) (RS)

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PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF THE WHOLE LANGUAGE APPROACH TO LITERACY EDUCATION IN THE DEPRESSED ECONOMIES OF THE THIRD WORLD: THE NIGERIAN EXPERIENCE.

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INTRODUCTION

The effectiveness of any language curriculum is dependent on many intertwining variables. Two of them, the political and the economic are very important. The political variable is very crucial. It is responsible for putting in place a relevant language policy that should lead to the evolution of an appropriate result - oriented and sustainable machinery which in turn is expected to ensure the effective implementation of the entire curriculum. The economic variable is also very important. It ensures that a result - oriented institution is in place. The institution is expected to ensure that there is provision of enough funds regarding the implementation of the policy. Thus if the language policy is to be durable and not to suffer any decay, it must be backed by both a political and an economic will.

Tragically, the language curriculum in most Third World countries like Nigeria is not backed by any political will and discernible sound economic policy. The English Language curriculum in Nigeria, for instance, at the primary and secondary levels, is grossly ineffective. According to Onukaogu (1994) :

> *the lack of a political will to evolve and implement a dynamic and relevant national English Language policy, preponderance of inexperienced and unqualified teachers of English Language, inadequate English Language textbooks and the absence of realia to meaningfully motivate and sustain learner's interest in the English Language, hinder any meaningful teaching of English in Nigerian primary and secondary schools (p 4).*

There is enough evidence to show that even at the tertiary level, the English Language curriculum is not sustained by any sound or meaningful political and economic will (Afolayan, 1984). If English, the official language of Nigeria, the national lingua franca and the medium of instruction in all Nigerian schools, colleges and universities, suffers gross neglect, one can then imagine the decay that has been allowed to envelop the Nigerian mother tongues which at the last count were over 400 and which are only used for intra-ethnic communication. The inescapable but very painful conclusion is that the language curriculum in Nigeria as it is the case in most Third World countries is never given the political and economic support it deserves. Given the above background, one wonders whether there is indeed any hope for a robust and vibrant development of a Whole Language Approach (WLA)to literacy instruction in Nigeria and the Third World.

Whole Language: What is it ?

In its simplest form, "Whole Language (WL) is a broad and fundamental revolution in education "(Goodman, 1993 p 7) which studies and conceptualizes the natural way humans learn language and recycles into the classroom the observed and identified natural processes in order to maximize and optimize language teaching and learning. Besides, this revolution in education is a major shift in focus from the behavioral views in which language is seen as something outside the child, somehow taught the child or learned through conditioning (Goodman. 1989). "This revolution" according to Goodman is also "a shift in focus from an old view, recently revived that language is not learned at all but is innate. In this view, language in some underlying and universal form is pre - programmed into the

human brain, needing only exposure to some real human language to be realized" (Goodman, 1989 p 32). The reduction of language learning to nature (nativist) and nurture (behavioral) can not separately account for the how and why of language development. As a matter of fact, "the how and why of language development are inseparable in attempting to understand both oral and written language" (Goodman, 1989 p 132). We more or less see Whole language as an approach or philosophy to language teaching. We agree with Goodman et al that :

> *Whole language brings together modern, scientific knowledge of teaching, learning, language, and curriculum and puts it into a positive, humanistic philosophy, which teachers can identify with and which offers them strong criteria for their professional decisions and teaching practice (Goodman, Bird, Goodman 1991 p 10).*

One of the assumptions which informs Whole language as stated by Goodman (1989) is that :

> *If language develops to meet universal personal and social needs, the written language development is simply an extension of that process. It comes when oral language is insufficient to meet the communicative needs of the individual and the society. Furthermore, children growing in a literate society in which written language performs vital functions will begin at early ages to internalize these functions, to experiment with the use of written language to meet their own needs and to gain control over the forms of written language. In short, they will begin to develop as readers and writers before they reach school age and without instruction (p134).*

Because of the above indisputable assumption, we do not in Whole language disintegrate language into the so - called sacred skills -listening, speaking, reading and writing. We believe that with an appropriate social setting that meaningfully allows the learners to interact among themselves in authentic language use, not only would the learners acquire language competence, their proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing would also be enhanced. There are some other assumptions which endear Whole language to teachers. Some of them include :

a) Democratic ideals; Whole language respects the individuality of the learner and therefore insists *that students need to be actually involved and in control of their own learning* (Goodman, 1989 p 3). The traditional teaching in which the learner passively sits to observe and be spoon fed is not endorsed in Whole language. Whole language contends that " learning potential is expanded through faith in the learner" (Freeman and Freeman, 1992 p 7). In Whole language teaching and learning are organized along democratic principles.

b) The relevance of meaning; In Whole language the subject matter is related to aspects of life that are familiar to the learner. Every effort is therefore made to ensure that each lesson has meaning purpose for the learner.

c) Language use and not rote learning; Whole language frowns at the memorization of language facts and statements but encourages extensive use of language for authentic communication. As students interact among themselves, they construct and share meaning

(Harste, 1992; Freeman and Freeman, 1992). Such construction and sharing are healthy for language learning.

d) Second language learning; When we effectively and efficiently apply Whole language, we can even in second language enhance the simultaneous acquisition of both oral and written language.

Economic Depression And Whole Language.

Our position in this paper is that the economic depression in the Third World may not allow for a robust development of Whole language. One aftermath of the depression is the prevalence of military dictatorship in most Third World countries. It is unthinkable that democracy can ever inform educational practices in a non democratic society. There are two other outcomes of the depression which are relevant to the thesis of this paper. First, there is the issue of the decay of education. Second, there is the issue of economic instability which has been caused by a regular devaluation of most Third World currencies.

Education in most Third World countries is in a state of decay. For instance, Adeyemo (1994) in one of Nigeria's national newspapers contends that:

> *Education at all levels in Nigeria is suffering some handicaps. These constraints affect all factors or agents in the education matrix. The teachers are in want of money because their salaries are not paid. The pupils are in dire need of moral, material and financial support. These they can obtain from the funding agent, the government, which is also facing problems in its financial and economic policy implementation which would have helped the pupils in he primary schools (Adeyemo, 1994 p 25).*

As Adeyemo has rightly pointed out," *day in day out, this important foundation of education is allowed to suffer and its total collapse is a matter of time*" (p25). The attitude of allowing education to decay cuts across all levels of the school system. For instance, in Nigeria 30 out of the 31 universities in the country were shut for over five months during the 1991/92 academic year because members of the Academic Staff Union Of Nigerian Universities requested the government to improve the funding and maintenance of Nigerian universities. Both the teacher and the pupils are vital elements that are needed for Whole language. When their very existence is threatened, one can not even talk of Whole language.

The constant devaluation of the currencies of the Third World have a number of adverse effects on language teaching and learning. In the first place, it cuts the Third World off the main stream of educational development in the rest of the world. Books, journals and other materials that are indispensable to language teaching and learning are because of their prohibitive costs beyond the reach of both teachers and learners. Thus most language teaching and learning activities in the Third World are not informed by current development in language studies. Secondly, the teachers' morale is usually very low. They are very poorly remunerated despite their efforts in very trying and exerting circumstances. They do not have the opportunity to attend learned conferences where they can enhance their professional and academic growth. Even the institutions that employ these teachers

because of the poverty in their respective countries can not organize in - service training for them. We are therefore of the view that it will take the indomitable and resilient will of Third World teachers and some kind of miracle for them to adopt, adapt and practice Whole language.

The Inevitable Resurgence of Illiteracy.

One inevitable effect of the decay of education in the Third World is the resurgence of illiteracy in all levels of the school system. According to Omojuwa (1985) while illiteracy is accepted as a rule and not as an exception in the primary school system people are now alarmed by the overwhelming evidence of illiteracy at the secondary school level. That is why according to him:

> *The focus of public attention is now secondary schools and concern has now increasingly been expressed about the growing incidence of near total illiteracy amongst post - primary pupils. In some cases, the issue is not much of inefficient reading as it is one of total inability to read in English and - quite often in any Nigerian language (Omujuwa, 1985 p100).*

Abe (1984) and others have expressed some concern regarding the illiteracy syndrome that is now a prevalent feature among undergraduates. Given the negative academic performance of Nigerian undergraduates nationwide, it would appear that the Nigerian government invests more in failure than in success (Tinuoye, 1991).

Our position is that illiteracy is a devastating disease, a cankerworm which must not be allowed to thrive in a nation. Our position is informed by a number of reasons. First, we feel that the development of the resources of any nation can not be enhanced when the generality of the people is illiterate. According to Ampene :

> *However well endowed a country may be with rich mineral resources, as long as the majority of its people remain illiterate and without modern skills, the quality of life in that country will for ever remain low. It is also a fact that a high illiteracy rate correlates with mass poverty, malnutrition, high infant mortality, low economic productivity, the prevalence of preventable diseases and population explosions (Ampene, 1986 p 2).*

Because of the high incidence of illiteracy, the standard of living in Nigeria for example is very low despite the fact that Nigeria is an oil producing country and is also extensively endowed with metallic and non metallic mineral resources. Sharing Ampene's stand, Oyediji argues further that:

> *an adult with a primary six certificate can become self-employed or can improve on his existing job as a result of the literacy acquired. If he is a farmer he can receive job oriented (functional literacy) instructions and thus become more productive. The driver who has just become literate can read road signs and reduce accidents; the literate carpenter or mason can now measure and become more accurate; a literate person can be given literature on hygiene of the body and surroundings and can thus improve on his health and that of his neighbors, thereby helping to ensure continuous production by citizens who would otherwise be incapacitated (Oyediji, 1986 p 13-14).*

If we are to address the depression in the Third World , we need to address also the resurgence and the prevalence of illiteracy in the area.

Secondly, we need to halt the illiteracy surge in the Third World in order to promote the art of good governance in the area. The passivity of the Nigerian populace to governance which has allowed military dictatorship to thrive is due in part to the fact that over 80% of the Nigerian adult population is illiterate (Oyediji, 1986). As other scholars have argued (Thompson, 1981; Maclaren, 1989), the illiterate person is vulnerable to bad governance and lacks the courage to challenge the status quo. Finally, we also know that information flow which also allows for good governance can not be possible where the majority of the people are illiterate. The superstition, rumour mongering and gullibility that have plagued most Third World countries hinder development. We endorse Oyediji's contention that "when majority of people in a nation are able to read and write, communication between the government and the people become easier and more people are able to participate in the political, social and economic activities of government" (Oyediji, 1986 p 11).

In order to eliminate illiteracy in the Third World, there is the need to evolve and or adopt an approach to the teaching of literacy which will take into cognizance the economic depression which has caused government to be non challant to issues regarding education. The approach to be adopted must be one that can be easily understood by literacy instructors. That is why we do not only share Unoh's (1985) caution for a "continuing search for a method that will make the task of learning to read less hazardous and much rewarding" (Unoh, 1985 p 6), we also share his concern that " the reading teacher runs the risk of getting confused and his students becoming innocent victims of such confusion, unless a rationale choice, based on the particular needs of his students, is made (Unoh, 1985 p6). Besides, we will like to suggest that such an approach must have the capacity to facilitate literacy learning more than the current approaches or methods being used if it is to get the approval of both the teachers and policy makers.

Whole Language and Literacy Promotion in the Third World

There is now some evidence backed by a recent empirical study that shows that a Whole language approach to the teaching of Reading Comprehension facilitates literacy learning and teaching more than the Classical Method which currently informs the teaching of Reading Comprehension in most Third World Anglophone states, especially Nigeria. In the empirical study, a 4P's Reading Comprehension teaching model was compared with the Classical Method which is used extensively in the teaching of Reading Comprehension in Nigerian schools and colleges. Our disillusionment with the Classical Method led to the empirical study in which we compared it with the 4P's. We shall now briefly characterize the Classical Method and advance reasons why we feel it is not adequate in meeting our needs regarding the teaching of literacy.

According to Macha, the Classical Method consists of:

a) Presenting a text (usually a passage of varying length) to the learners. Asking them to read through it noting any difficult words (the reading is usually done silently).

b) Having read the passage, the teacher explains difficult words , often giving dictionary meanings.

c) The students are then given questions to assess the amount of information recovered from the passage. The questions are often of multiple choice.

d) Some questions are also aimed at testing mastery of structural patterns where a structure used by the writer is to be changed into another one by the students (Macha, 1982 p 52)

We have some very strong reservations regarding the Classical Method. We suspect that there are some in - built limitations which may not enhance its effectiveness. In the first place, this method seems to lend itself more easily to an ad hoc presentation of the Reading Comprehension lesson since it does not demand any serious planning or preparation from the teacher. Going by Macha's description of the method, there are definitely no serious demands on the teacher before, during and after the lesson. Besides, the method seems to cripple the initiative of the teacher whose main concern is usually the presentation of the lesson. Even at that, it is the leaner who works on his or her own without any serious input from the teacher. Thirdly, in this method Reading Comprehension is taught disintegratively and not holistically. From our observation of the method in the classroom and even going by Macha's description, we can hardly see any interactions among the learners. The Classical Method does not encourage learner to learner or learner to teacher interactions. Our observations point to the fact that in the method, students are not actively involved regarding what goes into the lesson planning and preparation. The method seems to promote more of recitation and less of discussion during the Reading Comprehension lesson. Finally, it seems that the Reading Comprehension lesson begins and ends with classroom presentation. The in-class and post-class activities that should logically follow the Reading Comprehension are not provided for by the method. Against the above background we decided to search for an alternative method or approach. It was this search that led us to the 4P's and its subsequent comparison with the Classical Method(cf. Onukaogu, 1993).

Although the 4P's is indigenous to Nigeria and was developed when the originator had no idea of Whole language and was merely intuitively searching for a more viable way of teaching Reading Comprehension in Nigerian schools and colleges, the 4P's has certain basic features which are in keeping with Whole language. For instance, Planning, Preparation, Presentation and Practice which are the main pivots of the model imply that the teaching of Reading Comprehension can not be ad hoc but must be based on careful and well articulated instructional approaches that are in keeping with tested and proven curriculum trends. Secondly, this model supports the holistic teaching of language and frowns at the disintegrative teaching of language along the four "sacred" skills. Finally, the model recognizes the centrality of the learner in the teaching and learning episode. Planning and Preparation the first two elements of the model are concerned with pre-class teacher activities that are expected to maximize and optimize in-class and post class activities of the learner. Presentation (the third element of the model) is concerned with the in-class interactions that inform the lesson and that enable the learner to take up more responsibility in the lesson. Practice (the fourth element of the model) is concerned with the post class activities that empower the learner and fixate in him or her permanent thirst for reading (see Onukaogu, 1991A and 1993 for the pedagogic philosophy that informs the 4P's).

In the above - mentioned study, it was found that students taught Reading Comprehension through the 4P's model:

a) have more confidence in the use of English and more transfer value from Reading Comprehension to Writing than students taught through the Classical Method.

b) have more Reading Comprehension achievement rates than those taught through the Classical Method.

c) appreciate and utilize schema in Reading Comprehension while those taught through the Classical Method do not.

As regards the teachers, the study shows that Reading Comprehension teachers who use the 4P's:

a) initiate and sustain more result-oriented classroom interactions than those who use the Classical Method.

b) make: (i) extensive consultations (ii) information search and research and (iii) preparations before teaching while those using the Classical Method do not.

c) use a mixed bag of techniques in classroom presentation of which collaborative and workshop techniques and direct instruction were common while the teachers using the Classical Method stuck religiously to Macha' steps.

d) have classrooms that were characterized with student-centered activities while there were little or no observable activities in the Classical Method classrooms.

Given the overwhelming superiority of the 4P's over the Classical Method and given the tilting of the 4P's towards Whole language, we posit that if the 4P's is fine - tuned to embrace Whole language, then its impact on teaching and learning Reading Comprehension and literacy would be immense. We believe given the ease with which both teacher and learner embraced the 4P's that Whole language would also be similarly embraced since as we have tried to argue, both the 4P's and Whole language have much in common.

Some Problems in the Adoption of Whole Language

We shall now try to examine some of the problems that are bound to arise if Whole language is adopted in the literacy programs of Third World countries. We shall restrict our examination to the role of literature, the centrality of the learner and the significance of meaning in the acquisition of literacy. We shall also try to suggest how the problems can be resolved.

The Role of Literature in Whole Language

Whole language has high regard for the role of literature in the acquisition of language. Whole language teachers make extensive use of literature in their literacy lessons. That is why "Whole

language teachers think of the classroom as a learning context in which the total environment and all actions and interactions teach literacy" (Pinnel, 1989 p 105). Thus it is not unusual that what strikes one most when one enters a Whole language classroom is that the classroom looks like a literature immersion center where all kinds of literature beg to be examined, touched , tasted and digested. The emphasis on literature is captured by Cullinan who contends that:

> *Children learn to read by actually reading and not by doing exercises; reading is part of language and is learned the same way as other forms of language and learning in one area of language helps in other areas. Good literature is clearly the foundation of an effective language program and is central to reading and writing in Whole language classrooms (Cullinan* 1993 p xii).

Besides, as Glazer has rightly observed;

> *Literature-rich environments focus on functional and purposeful activities that guide and foster children to*
> *(i) take risks while learning and make decisions about learning*
> *(ii) self assess how and what they learn and*
> *(iii) learn to think about ideas and write them independently (Glazer, 1993 p 20)*

The economic depression that has plagued Third World countries has not only paralyzed the growth and the development of indigenous literature but has also adversely affected the development of ESL literature. Books are difficult to come by. Professional textbooks, fiction and trade books can not be obtained from overseas because of their prohibitive costs. The type of literature that is common place in Whole language - "a rich variety of literature of print books (fictional, informational, poetic) magazines, newspapers" (Altwerger, 1988 p 2) are beyond the reach of both teachers and learners. Certain panic measures taken by most Third World countries in order to salvage their economies like banning the importation of newsprint and printer's ink have dealt a death blow to the book industry and weakened the literacy base there.

In spite of the above scenario which seems to rule out the possible use of literature in the Third World, there is still hope for all is not lost. With the good will of international literacy organizations like the International Reading Association and the Whole Language Umbrella, Third World countries can benefit from book donation programs in the US. More importantly though, the above organizations can conduct workshops and summer schools in Third World countries so that their teachers can produce their own books using local materials. With some funding from such organizations as the UNESCO, UNICEF and UNDP the basic infrastructure can be provided that will make the book production program durable and effective.

The Centrality of the Learner.

In Whole language the learner plays a crucial role in the learning and teaching episode. Research evidence shows that children are competent learners "actively engaged in discovering the structure of language, self programming the simple rules of spelling, developing a sense of story and seeking meaning in reading" (Huck, 1989 p 81). The evidence shows that whoever handles Whole language

must adequately be versed in the various theories of learning especially the theory of language acquisition and learning. Secondly, the person must be equipped with the competence of observing how kids learn and how to build relevant inferences from "kid watching". In other words, the teacher applying Whole language must also be a researcher. That is why we completely agree with Watson and Stevenson (1989) that:

> *Implementing Whole language programs based on what children know rather than on trivialized texts and simulated stories, requires knowledge about reading and writing processes, the role of talk, and the concept of language across the curriculum. Using these programs means knowing how to observe learners, plan and keep records, continue using new information, turn responsibility over to students and keep parents involved (Watson and Stevenson, 1989 p 121).*

Given the economic depression in Third World countries and the lack of the political economic will by their respective governments to evolve and sustain vibrant and robust language policies that support Whole language, the likelihood of the governments undertaking the training of their teachers to the level suggested above by Watson and Stevenson is remote. Nevertheless if professional literacy organizations like the IRA and WLU can increase their supply of literature on Whole language in the Third World, more teachers from there will get to know of Whole language.

The Importance of Meaning

In Whole language, functional learning is given considerable importance because such learning forms the foundation for further learning(Goodman, 1989). That is why Whole language teachers " avoid workbooks, drill sheets and other materials designed to teach reading and writing through fragmentation and the simulations" (Altwerger, 1988 p 2). This position taken by Whole language teachers is informed by the knowledge that "children learn to love reading through their experiences with rich literature and they become writers through the process of meaningful writing" (Altwerger, 1988 p 2). Thus whatsoever is done in the Whole language classroom must be "be centered around matters of genuine importance to learners" (Altwerger, 1988 p 2). Not only do Whole language teachers monitor their children's language development but also appreciate the fact that their "pupils need to keep their focus on the meaning they are expressing and comprehending and not on language forms" (Goodman, 1989 p 139).

Functional and contextual use of language as postulated by Whole language demands the extensive use of realia and excursions into real life situations. This definitely demands funds and that is where the problems lie. For now Third World teachers can through local workshop be taught how to improvise using local resources.

Prospects of Whole Language in Third World

In spite of the seeming intractable problems that plague and might plague Whole Language practice in the Third World, the prospects of Whole Language there are immense. For instance, there is a body of Whole language practitioners in the Third World who are determined to implement Whole Language. Judith Thelen one time President of the International Reading Association testifies:

Speaking with educators in Nigeria, I found that they, burdened with Third World poverty, have been inhibited in literacy education because they lack materials. I have watched as they dug deep into their wallets to buy books they could not afford, but which would help them to better teachers (Thelen, 1992 p 25).

This indicates that there are many indigenous Third World professionals who are willing to make sacrifices in order to empower their learners to utilize the resources in Whole language. We have already mentioned the 4P's Reading Comprehension teaching model which we said is very much in keeping with Whole language. We shall now briefly describe a project of the Ile Ife branch of Teachers Applying Whole Language (TAWL) and the Curriculum Recycling theory as other examples of the pleasant trends that can enhance the development of Whole language in the Third World.

The Ile-Ife Chapter of TAWL

The Ile-Ife chapter of TAWL which is only three years old has embarked on a number of activities to acquaint literacy teachers in the area of Whole Language. One of them is the "Reading can be meaningful and fun project. This project which is organized at two levels, aims at promoting literacy amongst primary school pupils in Ile - Ife. First, the chapter has organized reading clubs for children in the area. Primary and secondary school students are encouraged to enroll and borrow books from the chapter's library.

Secondly, there is a study group which is to examine the effect on pupils when their reading is made purposeful, full of meaning, democratic, fun and pupil - centered. Pupils from very poor homes who do not have literacy facilitators were organized into special reading groups and taught literacy along Whole language principles.
Various kinds of literature were used; the pupils were given considerable freedom to choose what they wanted to read; the literacy sessions were made interactive; efforts were made to relate what was read, written or discussed to real life situations through excursions to centers of interest that were thematically related to literacy lessons; reading immersion session were encouraged along USSR lines. The reading abilities of these pupils are being carefully monitored. Their literacy abilities are also being compared with those of pupils with comparable abilities at the commencement of the studies who are being taught literacy through the conventional methods available in Ile-Ife primary schools.

The project is already blessed with some 512 different texts - novels, plays, poems, trade books and encyclopedia. The books were donated by Mrs. Sandra M. Best, coordinator of Instruction, Maxwell Airforce Base Elementary, Montgomery, Alabama. The Ile-Ife TAWL hopes to collect empirical data to test the hypothesis that: when reading is fun, democratic, result - oriented and meaningful the surrender value to writing would be more than when reading is not fun, democratic result-oriented.

The Curriculum Recycling Theory

The Department of Teacher Education, University of Ibadan has developed a Curriculum Recycling Theory which is in keeping with certain Whole language principles. This theory tries to study and characterize the creative and resourceful abilities of the Nigerian child. It examines the cognitive , affective and psycho - motor abilities that enable the child to contend with the problems of living in a

depressed economy. Exponents of this theory have examined and characterized the problem-solving and environment adjustment mechanism of the Nigerian child both at school and at home. The features exhibited by the child at home are startling when compared with those exhibited by the child at school. In the first place, at school the child has been found to be timid, docile and unimaginative. The child is not encouraged to use the mother tongue for learning. S/he is more or less compelled to use a foreign tongue for learning and for communicating with the colleagues. The child can thus not think because s/he does not have the resources to do so via a foreign tongue. The child can also not communicate with the colleagues because they too do not have the resources to do so in a foreign tongue. Unfortunately, the child and the colleagues are not encouraged to communicate in their mother tongue even though they have considerable facility to do so. At home on the other hand, the child uses the mother tongue to communicate, shows complexity in thinking, is very creative and interacts effectively with the peers. Thus at home the child is vibrant and very full of life.

Furthermore, the child does not question the authority of the teacher whom s/he has been culturally conditioned to regard as the repository of knowledge. As far as the child is concerned, the teacher is a infallible. The child would not want to answer any questions for fear of being ridiculed by the teacher and even by his peers. Meaning construction and risk taking in learning and communication are alien to the child because s/he is not encouraged to. In any case the child has been conditioned by the overbearing attitude of the teacher to believe that risk taking and meaning construction are the exclusive reserves of the teacher who is the source of classroom information. At home, the child on the other hand confronts the uncles/aunts, siblings and parents bombarding them with questions in order to understand and be in control of the world around the home. Through the mother tongue the child is entertained and entertains others.

Exponents of Curriculum Recycling have shown that at school the child detests the task assigned by the teacher because they bear no relevance to real life. The child can not and does not understand why certain gaps in workbooks and worksheets must be filled when such tasks can not enhance his or her bid to use the foreign tongue to communicate at home and at school. Truancy which most Nigerian children show during English language (the official foreign tongue) lessons has been attributed to the boredom the children experience and the lack of relevance to what is meaningful to them. At home, however, the child undertakes series of tasks and willingly performs them because they are relevant to his or her immediate needs. Besides, accomplishing the task helps the child to solve certain problems that affect survival in a depressed economy. The child taps innate intelligence with all the resourcefulness and creativity at his or her disposal.

From the evidence unearthed by the Recycling theorists, the Nigerian child at home is always excited about learning. The love for fantasy and make belief is kindled by the story telling sessions after the evening meal. The participatory nature of the story telling sessions evoke in the child a need to want to create and live vicariously the adventurous life of the tortoise and the hare - great animals of intrigue in Nigerian folklore. Unfortunately, at school, the language and literacy lessons are nightmares. There is no story, no fantasy. How can there be when the language of instruction is foreign and the child has no competence in it? Even if there is a story in the foreign tongue it is noise to the child. The child's disinterest in the foreign tongue is compounded by the teacher's insistence on meaningless and repetitive pattern drills.

It is instructive to observe that at home, the child makes extensive use of the hands to create things . From the mud, clay and sand around the home , the child builds toy cars, toy houses and pots . From metal scraps and corn stalks in the surroundings, the child designs wheel barrows for conveying water from distant areas to the home. At school, there are no toys to play with and no attempt is made to encourage the child to improvise. In order to impress and show evidence that she/he goes to school, the child is encouraged at school to indulge in rote learning. Our inescapable conclusion is that the school stifles the initiative and creativity of the child.

Curriculum Recycling zeroes in on the non formal curriculum that guides the child 's interests and influences his or her learning. As it characterizes the cognitive, affective and psycho - motor of the child's non formal curriculum, it strives to recycle them into the formal school curriculum so that the child would transfer into the school the zest and dynamism s/he manifests at home. Curriculum Recycling captures the emphasis Whole language places on the need to understand the learner and actively involve him or her in the development and implementation of the language curriculum.

Conclusion

In this paper we have tried to show that because the language curriculum has not been given the political and economic support it deserves, it is grossly ineffective and unable to meet the teaching and learning episodes in Third World countries. We tried to show that the economies of the Third World are depressed, and that the situation has been compounded by the decay in their education. This decay we posited, has led to the resurgence of illiteracy in all levels of the school system. The resurgence has, we tried to show, necessitated the need for an approach to illiteracy instruction which will be more relevant to their teaching and learning episodes. We were able to draw from a recent empirical study to show that Whole language has some promise which can facilitate literacy learning in the Third World. Although we examined the inherent problems that might occur in the adoption of Whole language, we still tried to show that the promise for Whole language is immense. We will like to end this paper by saying that illiteracy in the Third World must be resisted and eliminated. Sustainable development in the Third World we contend will remain elusive as long as illiteracy prevails in the area. Illiteracy will continue to make the people there passive to good governance. The passivity in the past four decades has encouraged military dictatorship in the area. Information flow an offshoot of literacy is bound to promote development in the area. Whole language is needed to boost literacy development.

Since we already have some empirical evidence to show that Whole language has the potentials of enhancing literacy in the Third World, we will like to recommend the adoption of Whole language in order to promote literacy and literacy education in the area. If the adoption of Whole language is to achieve the desired effect, certain issues must be addressed. In most Third World classrooms, the teacher is regarded as an impeccable and flawless model of the target language. The teacher is also an infallible and flawless generator and disseminator of knowledge. S/he can not be questioned or challenged. Such a conception of the teacher is in part responsible for the rote learning that is common there. The learner in addition usually dose not want to be assigned any responsibility nor does s/he have any confidence in the peers as facilitators of literacy. We therefore feel that the adoption of democratic principles, the turning over of responsibility to the learner and other common place practices in Whole language may be resisted by learners, parents and school administrators in the Third World. There is therefore the need to study the habits and attitudes of Third World learners in order to understand why

they do what they do what they do. We can then based on a better understanding of them introduce cautiously the most realistic ways that would make them switch over to Whole language.

There is also the need to contextualise and domesticate Whole language in Third World countries. This contextualization and domestication will enable their curriculum planners, implementers and innovators to know what role to assign Whole language in the teaching of the mother tongue, second and foreign language. We need to know where the facilitative role of Whole language is most effective or whether its effectiveness is equal in all three. Such understanding is needed because in most Third World nations, the nationals have been psychologically brainwashed and colonially conditioned to disregard the mother tongue in preference for the second language which is usually the language of the former colonial master. Finally, in order not to become a victim of the myth of transience which believes that by changing a program, an approach or method, required changes would automatically take place (cf Zamel, 1991), we can not endorse the installing of Whole language hook line and sinker in the Third World. There is the need to further undertake studies that would characterize those exogenous and endogenous features and models of language teaching and learning that would facilitate the adoption of Whole language in the Third World. Such studies would enable us to know more clearly how to appropriate the resources in Whole language in the literacy and literacy education programs in the Third World.

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